
A GOLDEN LEGACY:
WINFIELD SCOTT STRATTON AND
THE MYRON STRATTON HOME
1848 - 1998

The Myron Stratton Home



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A NOBLE LEGACY

A PERSPECTIVE ON THE HISTORY OF WINFIELD SCOTT
STRATTON AND THE MYRON STRATTON HOME
AS THE 20TH CENTURY ENDS

GARY LOO, PRESIDENT AND CHAIRMAN
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF THE MYRON STRATTON HOME



The history of the West is littered with dreams shattered by gold. The story of Winfield Scott Stratton is different.

When Mr. Stratton died in 1902, he left the proceeds of one of the richest strikes in gold field history to found The Myron Stratton Home. Thus, this year we celebrate the 150th anniversary of his birth looking back at the glory days, but also looking forward to the growth of the founda-



tion's work in the 21st century.

Many things have changed in less than a century. When The Myron Stratton Home was founded, Social Security and Medicare did not exist and orphanages were widely held to be the best way to care for children at risk. The society of El Paso County was still largely agricultural. The population was about 32,000.



Children from families in trouble attempted to earn a living or were placed in institutions that were basically warehouses. Citizens too old or infirm for gainful employment lived on their savings in genteel poverty, went into an institution where they might hope for a bed and a basic daily meal, or sometimes, just died.

But as early as 1921, children who grew up at The Home graduated from college, their higher education paid for by The Home. Elderly residents received not a pauper's burial, but an honorable interment in an appropriate place of rest. It is a noble legacy.



No small credit for this record of achievement goes to our predecessors on the board of trustees. Mr. Stratton's bequest was valued at \$4.4 million when planning for The Home began in 1909. Without skillful management and asset growth, always approved by the district court which interprets the will, the dream would have died out long ago because of inflation.

The Home also faced a revolution in social care during the century. Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid changed the way in which Americans took care of the groups that The Home was mandated to serve. In the 1970s, a process called "deinstitutional-

ization" became popular. Today, there are no more children's homes of the type Mr. Stratton envisioned; instead, youngsters are placed in private foster homes. Many older citizens are thought to have more resources than the poor of Stratton's time.



The Myron Stratton Home has changed with the times. When government regulations no longer supported long-term, residential child care for children of at-risk families, our staff developed new programs. In 1992, we entered into a 25-year agreement for the Cleo Wallace Center to manage and operate on-campus programs for emotionally disturbed children. The Center, headquartered in Westminster, has a distinguished record.

Elderly people on limited incomes continue to benefit from Stratton's heritage and receive services they would not be able to access readily in the community. Residents may pay one-third of their adjusted gross income to live at The Home. For some that means for less than \$200 a month, they live in private, separate cottages on secure, landscaped

grounds and receive a wide variety of supportive services.

When this great philanthropist wrote his will, it seemed to him and



his fellow citizens that the rules of the world were written in stone. Today, it seems they are written on electrical impulses in cyberspace and can change in an instant.

To stay current, our staff and trustees are continually looking at the needs of the children and elderly of our rapidly growing county and state. As we enter the era nearly a century after Mr. Stratton carefully wrote his will and shaped our guiding views, we intend to initiate new aspects of programs which have always been a part of The Myron Stratton Home.

Nothing is written in stone, except the generosity of Mr. Stratton and our determination, as the inheritors of his dream, to keep providing in a meaningful way for those whom society has overlooked. We are very



fortunate to be chosen to wrestle that challenge into a new millennium.

Please join us in celebrating a singular life and a golden heritage. It continues to be a rare gift to us all – a golden legacy.

WINFIELD SCOTT STRATTON PROSPECTOR, ENTREPRENEUR, HUMANITARIAN

Clara Anne McKenna

Winfield Scott Stratton was born July 22, 1848, in Jeffersonville, Indiana, and died Sept. 14, 1902, at home in Colorado Springs. His father was a shipbuilder in the Ohio River port and supplied several troop ships for the Mexican-American War. Myron Stratton named his son after war hero General Winfield Scott.

The younger Stratton studied carpentry in his father's shipyards and became an expert draftsman. In 1868, like many young men in the post-Civil War environment, he meandered west to seek his fortune. After stops in Eddyville, Iowa, where one of his sisters lived, and Lincoln, Nebraska, he ended up in Colorado Springs, a resort town founded by General William Jackson Palmer to encourage tourist custom on his railroad. James D. Raymond, a Lincoln acquaintance, first employed Stratton in his carpenter shop. Soon the man from Indiana opened his own carpentry and general contracting business. Ironically, Raymond died a resident of the Home.

Stratton caught the mining bug in the winter of 1874. He and three others bought a property in the San Juan Mountains of southwestern Colorado, but found no gold. The lure of prospecting held, however, and for the next 17 years, Stratton roamed the mountains, looking for silver and gold, and worked in Colorado Springs to get the money to do so. He also took time to educate himself, studying metallurgy at the Colorado School of Mines and mineralogy at Colorado



Winfield Scott Stratton, top, would name his greatest legacy after his father Myron.



College. On July 4, 1891, he struck pay dirt on the south slope of Pikes Peak, at a place called Cripple Creek. He named the claim the Independence.

Stratton's post-strike life was as complex and full of seeming contradictions as any best-selling novel. Colorado Springs had been dubbed Little London early in its founding because its leading citizens saw it as a special place of culture in the great Wild West, but the new magnate did not see himself as part of that elite. Other Cripple Creek millionaires built fancy homes north of Colorado College. Stratton's comfortable dwelling was on North Weber Street, not far from the central business district and the site of his carpenter shop.

For his own reasons, he embarked on programs which benefited the people who provided ordinary services for the community. For example, he bought and upgraded the local street car company, but when he feared the fare might be too high for local laundresses and sewing ladies, he bought them bicycles with baskets to pick up and deliver their bundles around town. In Cheyenne Cañon, he purchased a large tract of ranch land, created a destination called Stratton Park, and ran a street car line to it so the citizens would have an attractive, low-cost destination on Sunday afternoon.

MAKING PROVISIONS

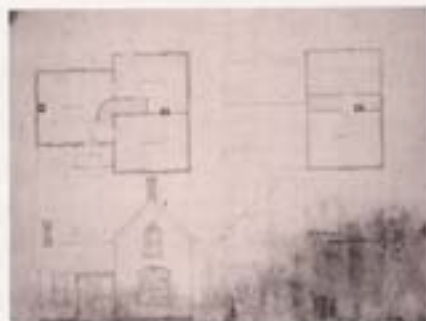
Stratton was reclusive and rumors of problems with women and liquor abounded, but his shrewd business head kept his assets growing. As his health failed, he made a will endowing a home named after his father. It commanded that "the inmates of said home



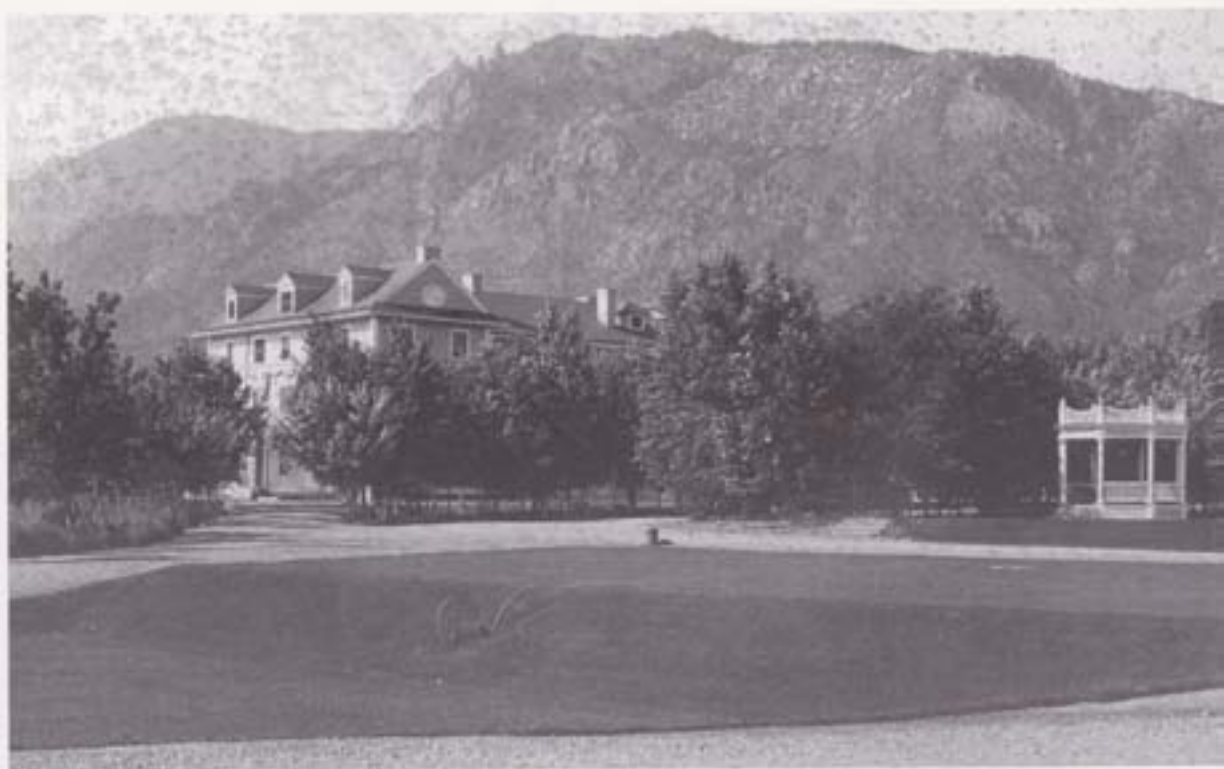


When early residents of The Myron Stratton Home danced 'round the Maypole in 1914, there was little else but horizon for miles and miles.

A rare rendering of a house plan by Winfield Scott Stratton shows his eye for detail.



The well-planned grounds of The Myron Stratton Home signaled a pioneering oasis for poor children and the elderly early in the history of Colorado Springs.



To provide activities that nourished bodies as well as minds, The Home fielded several baseball and softball teams for kids.



shall not be clothed and fed as paupers usually are at public expense but...decently and comfortably clothed and amply provided with good and wholesome food and necessary medical attendance, care and nursing to protect their health and insure their comfort."

In an age of Social Security and Medicare, his directions seem simple enough, Yet the concept was so radical in the early 20th century that after his death, a firestorm of protest raged when the terms of the will became known. Some feared Colorado Springs would become a haven for paupers. Others were angry he had not endowed the city's main cultural institutions. After all, the community already had a poor farm.

THE CHALLENGE

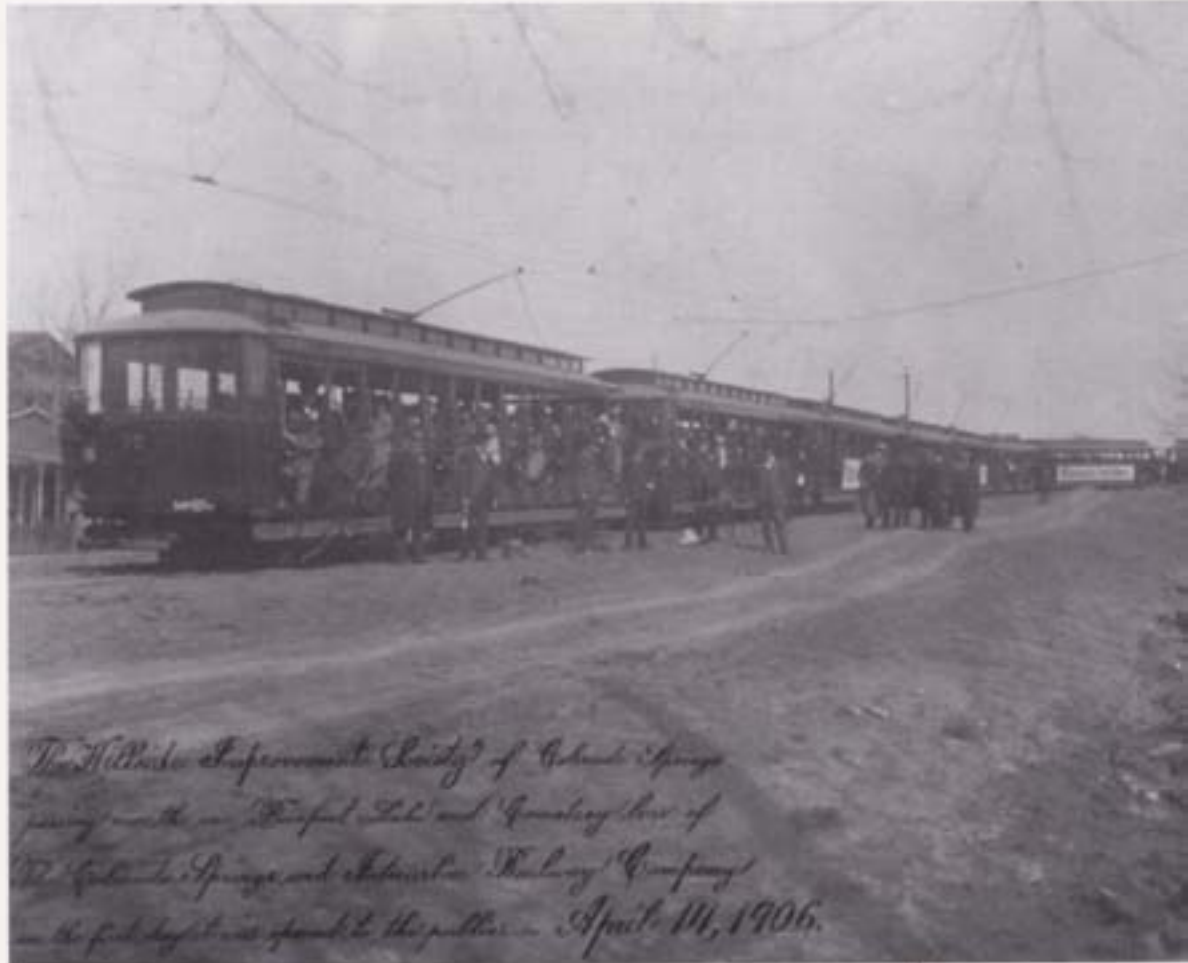
In their first public report in August 1911, the trustees of The Myron Stratton Home assured citizens that the institution would "give the worthy poor instruction and training that would enable (young people) to go forth from this Home independent and self-sustaining... Many communities have felt honored by being designated by benevolent persons as places in which trust moneys were to be expended in industrial schools for boys, industrial schools for girls, or homes for the aged. These are to combined in The Myron Stratton Home, and should be a welcome addition to the welfare of any community."

Still, the task of combining both age groups and genders in one facility was a daunting one, little tried in the progressive social reforms now coming into fashion. George

George Barton, the prominent institutional architect who developed initial plans for The Home, wrote in his report: "The needs of the Home for the present are difficult to tabulate. The problem will define itself only by its own birth and growth. How to foresee even in the vaguest way what its growth and consequent needs are likely to be a century from hence is impossible..."

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It took 11 years of litigation, but the will held. In December 1913, the first elderly residents were admitted to The Myron Stratton Home, a newly constructed facility about two miles southwest of downtown. The first child came in February 1914.

The Colorado Springs & Interurban Railway, upgraded by Stratton and his estate, provided convenient transportation to the early residents of the city and was an important means of transportation to members of the Hillside Improvement Society in 1906.



*Prize pigs
grazed in
orchards and
fields only 18
blocks from
downtown.*



THE FOUNDATION: MAKING THE DREAM A REALITY

Karl Ross, past president of The Myron Stratton Home.

Mr. Stratton's will expressed his dream for the care and comfort for the aged and the upbringing and education of the young in very general terms, stated sketchily in six paragraphs. He left it to his three trustees to bring the dream to reality.

The three gentlemen in question were his physician, David H. Rice, his attorney, Tyson S. Dines, and William Lennox, a prominent business man and mining magnate. The court appointed Lennox with the full concurrence of the other two trustees, to fill the vacancy created by Judge Moses Hallet's refusal to accept his appointment under the will because of other involvements. Ably assisting the trustees in their endeavors was William Lloyd, Stratton's secretary, who was probably more familiar with Stratton's dreams and philosophy than anyone else. He



Karl R. Ross

In the early 20th century, architects and trustees envisioned a tranquil setting able to provide for all the needs of all its "inmates," as residents then were called.



DATES OF PRINCIPAL EVENTS

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September 14th, 1902 – Mr. Stratton's death

September 20th, 1902 – Will filed for probate.

September 26th, 1902 – O.P. Grimes, C.C. Hamlin and H.M. Blackmer appointed Administrators to Collect.

October 28th, 1902 – These removed by order of the District Court, and D.H. Rice, T.S. Dines and A.G. Sharp appointed in their stead.

September 29th, 1902 – I.H. Stratton files objections to admission of will to probate.

December 29th, 1902 – Will admitted to probate.

March 24th to April 7th, 1903 – Trial of Will Contest and settlement for \$350,000.

April 23rd, 1903 – Administrators to

Collect discharged and Executors, D.H. Rice, Tyson S. Dines and C.S. Chamberlin take charge.

1903 – 1909 – Fighting \$23,000,000 of litigation and building up the Estate.

April 23rd, 1909 – The Executors file petition asking leave to turn over the bulk of the Estate to the Trustees, D.H. Rice, Tyson S. Dines and W. Lennox.

August 13th, 1909 – Broadmoor property bought by The International Realty Co.

November 12th, 1909 – The Myron Stratton Home incorporated.

January 3rd, 1910 – The Myron Stratton Home begins business.

February 21st, 1910 – The International Realty Company deeds the Broadmoor property to The Myron Stratton Home.

1910 – 1911 – Spring Run Reservoir

built and G.E. Barton submits Preliminary Report.

1912 – Pipe Line Extension (2 miles) to The Home completed and definite, comprehensive plan for the completed Home by M.B. Biscoe accepted.

February 25th, 1913 – Contract executed with J.J. Cooke for the construction of the first unit of the Home, 13 buildings, contract price \$147,895.00.

• *From The Endowment and Founding of The Myron Stratton Home or THE FIRST DECADE OF A VILLAGE INSTITUTION BY WILLIAM LLOYD, Secretary*

• *Being a Paper Read at the Semi-Annual Conference of the State Board of Charities and Corrections Held in the Capitol Building, Denver, Colorado, on December 3d, 1912.*

later served for many years as a trustee and president of The Home.

The Trustees, influenced to a large extent by the study and analysis performed by architect Edward George Barton, adopted the concept of an Industrial Village to guide them. This concept presupposed the construction of a self-sufficient campus or village supported by a farm, a dairy and a ranch.

The children would be taught not only purely academic subjects but also given practical training. The boys would receive manual training in The Home's shops and experience working in the dairy and on the farm and ranch. The girls would receive extensive training in sewing, cooking and the rudiments of nursing. The goal adopted for the education and training of the children was to provide them with the necessary skills to succeed.

The elderly were to be comfortably housed, adequately fed and permitted to follow their own pastimes, so long as they were not anti-social, without undue regimentation.

The site selected for this village, in the Broadmoor area, was owned by the Receiver of the land development company founded by Count Pourtales for the development of





David P. Strickler was part of the team of attorneys which successfully defended The Stratton will. He served as president of The Home from 1946 to 1962.



Children's dormitories were light and airy and embodied the most advanced concepts of child care of the time.

A typical dining room of the early period



*A fine draft horse made
field work easier.*



the Broadmoor mesa. The purchase, at a price of \$350,000, encompassed not only the present 100 acres on which The Home is located but also all of the undeveloped land and unsold lots in Pourtales' development, together with his casino and the water system serving the area. With this purchase, the Board not only obtained a magnificent site for The Home but put themselves into the land development and utility business. To provide an area for the agricultural activities of the village, the Board acquired all of the land on which the Stratton Meadows subdivisions are presently located and some additional 3,500 acres, a portion of which was acquired by Fort Carson and the balance developed by the Gates Land Company.

The plans for The Home developed by Mr. Barton and his associate M.B. Biscoe were accepted by the Trustees and the first contract for the construction of 13 buildings was let in February 1913 at a contract price of less than \$150,000. The Home admitted its first adult residents in December 1913 and its first children in early 1914.

Life for the children followed fairly well that envisioned in the Industrial Village concept. The goal of the administration was to duplicate, as much as possible, the life a child would find in his own private home. The management's view of a model home was one in which the child was guided every hour of the day, both in play and work, by more mature minds.

Initially, children attended school on The Home grounds. In 1918, the private school was closed and the children enrolled in public schools. On The Home grounds, the

TRUSTEES OF THE MYRON STRATTON HOME

D.H. Rice	1909-1923
Tyson S. Dines	1909-1929
W. Lennox	1909-1934
William Lloyd	1923-1949
Carl S. Chamberlin	1929-1934
David P. Strickler	1934-1962
Charles G. Graham	1934-1944
Carl W. Chamberlin	1944-1956
Herbert L. Stubbs	1949-1958
A.G. Hill	1956-1976
Karl R. Ross	1958-1996
John S. Chamney	1962-1990
Peter J. King, Jr.	1975-1993
C. William Schlosser	1975-1994
Gary O. Loo	1976 - current
Barbara L. Yalich	1991 - current
Robert G. Baker, Jr.	1993 - current
Joseph C. Woodford	1994 - current
Jon J. Medved	1996 - current

children received manual training and were assigned duties in the dairy, on the farm and on the ranch. Younger children planted and cultivated their own vegetable gardens.

Even though life for the children was somewhat rigidly structured, many recreational activities, extracurricular sports and musical training were provided. After the use of the automobile became common, trips throughout the country were sponsored for the older children.

The most singular advantage a graduate of The Home enjoyed over most of his contemporaries living in private homes was The Home's policy of financing education beyond the high school level for those qualified. Many of the graduates went on to colleges and universities, as well as nursing school and other occupational training. Many who did not pursue a college education or other academic training became successful journeymen in the mechanical trades.

Early on, management acknowledged that their most





Attendance at a 1917 meeting of the Sewing Club was essential for older girls who wanted to fashion themselves an up-to-date wardrobe.



Buildings of The Home dominated the landscape for miles in the early days. Today, homes, shops and even military installations occupy the former fields of the institution.

*Residents enjoy
a Labor Day
Picnic.*



*Many resi-
dents
came
home to
The Myron
Stratton
Home to
celebrate
their wed-
dings, as
did this
couple in
1937.*



Dad Nolan, a resident of The Home photographed in 1930



puzzling problem was finding suitable occupations for the elderly. The early superintendents' reports to the Board of Trustees expanded on the problem by noting the diverse attitudes of the elderly, reporting that some determined to spend their time in "idle uselessness - bemoaning the evils of others," while others eagerly sought activities and work they could do within their physical limitations.

Residents of the housekeeping cottages were encouraged to have their own vegetable and flower gardens in spaces provided adjacent to their individual cottages. The women were asked to do sewing and mending for the children and both men and women were recruited to assist in the cafeteria. Some of the elderly developed their own active role in the management of The Home. One gentleman, for example, became the operator and manager of The Home's greenhouse and nursery and took on the responsibility for the propagation of all of the plants and flowers utilized on The Home's grounds. While the elderly were urged to take on worthwhile projects, their lives and activities were never directed like those of the children.

The adult program has evolved over the years. With the advent of Social Security, virtually all of the older residents receive some income. Many of them own and drive their own automobiles. Today, the cottages have all been remodeled and converted into small duplexes providing



A weathered newspaper clipping from The Home's archives attests that Stratton helped a library getting underway in the mining town of Breckenridge.

kitchens, living rooms, bedrooms and private baths for each of the single residents. By Court decree, the adult residents admitted since 1992 now pay a small part of their income as rental for their cottages, an amount similar to that paid by elderly residents of federally subsidized housing.

Under Mr. Stratton's will, the executors were directed to sell all of his assets and invest the proceeds in good and safe interest-bearing securities. These assets included stock in corporations which he established for his various endeavors.

The Stratton Cripple Creek Mining and Development Company owned and operated all of the mining properties. The International Realty Company held title to and managed all of his real estate and the Colorado Springs and Interurban



Members of the Mining Exchange in Colorado Springs pose before the big board at the turn of the century. The Exchange was a Stratton building project.



The first young residents of The Myron Stratton Home and staff members gather for a photo in 1914.

Railway Co. operated the trolley car system in Colorado Springs, Manitou and the Broadmoor-Cheyenne Cañon area. In addition to these corporations the estate owned a large block of the Portland Gold Mining Co. and the executors acquired, through foreclosure, the Brown Palace Hotel.

The executors were unable to carry out the directions for the sale of the estate assets and they were distributed to the trustees and the corporation in kind. The Trustees were no more successful than the executors in obtaining purchasers for the various assets. They were not interested in holding a fire sale. Offers were made from time to time for the purchase of the mining company, the Brown Palace Hotel and some of the real estate, but there was little interest in the streetcar company. Very few of the proposals were considered worthy of much consideration and were rejected, or the purchasers were unable to make good on their proposals. The Trustees were left with no alternative but to continue to operate the various companies.

MINING

(All Situated in the Cripple Creek Mining District)
The Stratton Cripple Creek Mining and Development Company owns over 500 acres in two groups, the Bull Hill Group and the Globe and Gold Hills Group. These comprise such well known properties as the American Eagles, the John A. Logan, the Orpha May, the Abe Lincoln, etc. When Mr. Stratton died, the company had but a small cash balance on hand and, after a brief continuance of his policy of mining on the Company's account, its Board decided to lease. \$300,000 in Dividends has since been paid. The Executors have not taken an interest in a single lease, nor allowed any associate or employee to become interested in one.

From A Review and Summary of Accounts of the Estate of the Late W.S. Stratton from September 14th, 1902, to January 1st, 1909

*By William Lloyd,
Secretary*

THE BOWL OF GOLD

After Stratton's sale of the Independence Mine, he pursued his theory that large, rich deposits of gold would be found at depth in the center of the ancient volcano which created the gold deposits in the district. He spent approximately \$6 million of the Independence sale proceeds acquiring mining claims and companies whose properties were located in what was believed to be the center of the volcano. He was spending between \$40,000 and \$50,000 per month at the time of his death in developing these properties, hoping to prove his theory correct.

None of this development opened up any spectacular deposits of ore and what little was produced fell far short of the cost of development. After his death, the executors ceased the development work and direct-mining operations and adopted a policy of leasing out portions of the various mines on a royalty basis.

Production of gold from the Cripple Creek District



From top to bottom; Stratton Estate
Globe Hill Group, Bull Hill Group
and Stratton's Independence mine
locations in the Cripple
Creek-Victor Mining District.



Work upgrading the Colorado Springs street car company lines continued after Stratton's death.



After 17 years of prospecting from the San Juans to the Front Range, Winfield Scott Stratton found gold on July 4, 1891, on a granite outcrop which became the Independence mine of the Cripple Creek-Victor Mining District.

declined each year after 1900. By 1920, the total royalties received by the mining company in the 18 years since Stratton's death amounted to only \$458,000. The dividends received from the stock in the Portland Gold Mining Company totaled \$1.24 million in the same period. The decline in production continued through the 1920s. Even the Portland fell on hard times and solicited loans from its major shareholders in 1922 to finance development work. The Trustees slowly disposed of the Home's holdings of Portland stock through the open market.

Mining picked up somewhat in the 1930s after the government's fixed price for the purchase of gold was raised from \$20 per ounce to \$35. In 1944, however, the War Production Board of the federal government ordered all of the gold mines in the country shut down in an effort to force those engaged in mining into industries or occupations essential to the war effort. The Cripple Creek District, as Stratton knew it, never recovered.

In the late 1940s, Thayer Lindsley, one of the world's leading mining men, was granted an option for a lease through his company, Ventures, Ltd., covering all of the properties owned by the mining company. Lindsley undertook a

very comprehensive exploratory program seeking to determine what success might be achieved through an open pit mining operation, producing and processing 3,000 tons of material per day. Approximately two years were spent in drilling and assaying samples taken mainly from the Globe Hill area of the Company's property. The average of the thousands of samples analyzed did not quite equal Lindsley's minimum and the project was dropped.

In 1970, Gordon Peter Reid, a grandson of Verner Z. Reid, the broker who sold Stratton's Independence to an English syndicate, requested a lease of the company's properties. Reid was an investment counselor in New York City and familiar with the district because of his family's continued ownership of the Molly Kathleen Mine. He, too, was interested in an open pit operation, but proposed to refine the production from the pits with a heap leaching process using a cyanide solution.

Reid's proposition was accepted and a lease was granted. He actually produced gold bullion from the Stratton properties for the first time since the mines were closed in 1944. Unfortunately, he was undercapitalized and was forced out of business.

One of Reid's backers was Paul Temple, a successful oilman residing in Virginia. After Reid gave up, Temple indicated an interest in purchasing the property and Temple bought the mining company's stock in 1985 for \$2 million. The Home reserved an overriding royalty interest in all of the properties owned by the mining company.

Temple later sold the stock, which eventually ended up with the Independence Mining Company, a subsidiary of a large European mining firm. The Independence Company formed a joint venture with the Golden Cycle Corporation and as the Cripple Creek and Victor Gold Mining Company, it

Modern sprinkler cars controlled the dust on the unpaved streets of Colorado Springs which were serviced by streetcar lines.



acquired virtually all of the remaining properties in the Cripple Creek District not owned by the Stratton Company or Golden Cycle.

The present open pit and heap leach operation is the result of the joint venture's efforts. Fortunately, a large proportion of the pit is located on former Stratton properties and substantial royalties have been received over the past several years. Whether the new operators will prove or disprove Stratton's "bowl of gold" theory remains to be seen.

TRACK & TROLLEYS

The fate of Stratton's street car company was not as rosy as that of the mining company. Stratton purchased the city franchise, the trolley car system and rolling stock in 1900 for \$350,000. The company had been failing for several years. Its equipment was inadequate and the system served only a small part of the city, with lines to Broadmoor and Manitou.

After his purchase, Stratton junked all of the cars and

"After his purchase, Stratton junked all of the cars, replacing them with new, larger equipment, installed heavier rails and expanded routes throughout the area. After his death, his executors completed the project at a total cost of \$2 million. The end result was a trolley car system with 42 miles of track, 100 forty-foot, eight-wheeled cars and Stratton Park – a 20-acre park at the end of the Cheyenne Cañon lines with a pavilion capable of seating 3,500 people."

Karl Ross, former president of The Myron Stratton Home



The street car company was responsible for much of the work when streets in Colorado Springs were first paved.



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To ride the cars cost five cents with discounted fares through the purchase of tokens. The Public Utilities Commission of the state regulated the fares. Under the terms of its franchises, the company had to sprinkle the unpaved streets which its tracks traversed. When streets were paved by the establishment of local improvement districts, the com-

pany was required to absorb the cost of paving between its tracks and for a substantial distance to either side. As a result,

approximately one-third of the total cost of paving the city's main thoroughfares was borne by the company.

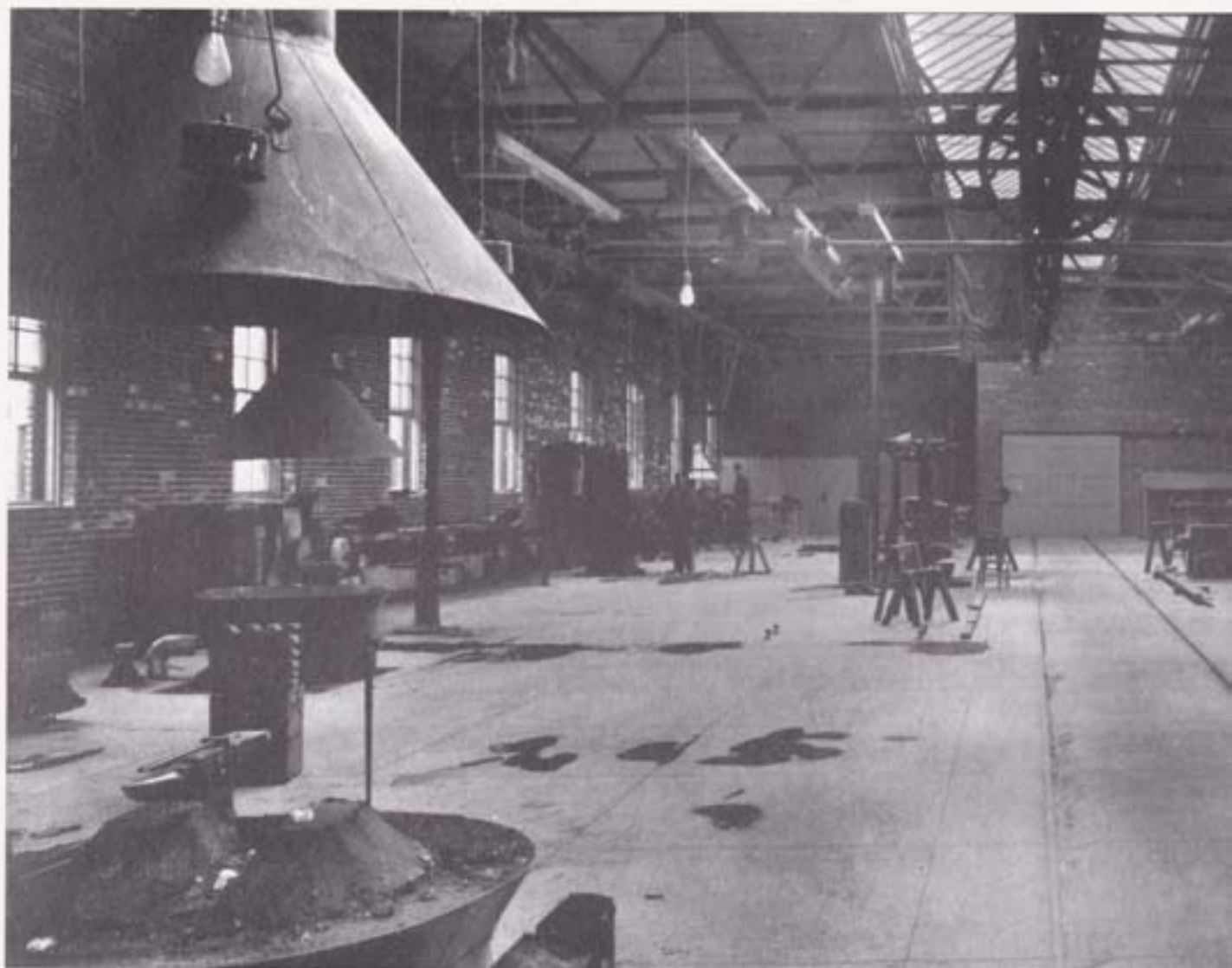
For the first few years after its rebuilding, the company showed a profit and was able to pay dividends to The Home. With the advent of the automobile and its growing usage, ridership dropped and profitability decreased until, in the 1920s, the company was generating annual deficits. Efforts were made to increase fares, but with each increase, car pools sprang up in retaliation. The City Council also turned a deaf ear to requests by the company to relieve it from its paving and street maintenance burdens.

Fares increased to a dime in 1926, but declining ridership continued. In order to protect The Home's endowment, the Trustees surrendered the company's franchise to the city and ceased operations at midnight on April 30, 1932. The city immediately instituted a bus service on part of the routes. Through different ownerships and management, the service continues to this day, but only through subsidization by the taxpayers.

The company sold the rolling stock to purchasers throughout the country and elsewhere. The ties and rails were removed from most of the routes, although trackage still exists underneath the pavement on Colorado Avenue. The pavilion in the park at the end of the line had been dismantled, moved to The Home and rebuilt as the administration building and theater in 1924.



Coworkers gather around a proud father and young son visiting an early car barn.



The company's most valuable assets were its real estate, composed of the car barns and shops in the 500 block of South Tejon Street and Cascade Avenue, and its power plant located in the 700 block of South Sierra Madre Street. These properties were transferred to The Home upon the company's dissolution and have produced income for The Home's operations far greater than that ever produced by the street-car company.

REAL ESTATE

With Cripple Creek's decline in the early 1920s, income from the International Realty Co. became the main support for The Home. At the time of Stratton's death, the real estate in



Shop facilities at the Colorado Springs & Interurban Railway were state of the art for the early 20th century.



Workers pause during street paving on the west side of the line.

the company produced little net income. The holdings consisted of three corners in downtown Denver: 17th and Welton streets, 17th and Stout streets and 15th and Stout.

In Colorado Springs, properties included the Mining Exchange and Independence buildings, the northeast corner of Tejon Street and Colorado Avenue, the northeast corner of Nevada and Colorado avenues, and the southwest corner of Kiowa Street and Nevada Avenue, as well as two small buildings on Pike Peak Avenue, the Telegraph and Freeman buildings. The Freeman Building contained Stratton's office, those of the executors and later, the business offices of The Home.

Stratton also owned the southeast corner of Pikes Peak and Nevada avenues. Before his death, he had submitted a proposal to the U.S. Postal Service for the sale of this



The downtown Post Office (far left) which meant so much to Stratton shared its block on Nevada Avenue with a number of businesses during the middle of the century. The business area currently is being remodeled into an office complex. The Post Office, renamed the Winfield Scott Stratton Post Office through the lobbying efforts of Home alumnus John Zorack and the Friends of Winfield Scott Stratton, is still in business. Zorack, a nationally known lobbyist who was the subject of a "Sixty Minutes" interview, lived at The Home from 1936 to 1943, when he enlisted in the Marine Corps and became a career officer, later attending law school.

Street improvements have been part of life in Colorado Springs since Stratton's time.



property for the construction of a new post office to replace the post office then located on the first floor of the Independence Building. Based on this initial proposal, the executors sold the property to the government and the present downtown post office is located on this site.

The executors upgraded the various properties and were able to increase substantially the income. The property located at 17th and Stout Streets in Denver was ground leased by them for a term of 99 years for the construction and location of the First National Bank of Denver. The bank remained at this location until 1958, at which time it moved into its new quarters two blocks up 17th Street at Welton, also ground leased from The Home. The property at 15th and Stout streets was sold in 1920 and the Brown Palace Hotel, acquired by the executors through foreclosure, was sold to Charles Boettcher in 1922.

The Home continued to upgrade, replace and remodel the improvements on the remaining parcels of real estate in order to increase the rental revenue. In Colorado Springs, a new building was constructed at Colorado Avenue and Tejon Street shortly after World War I and remodeled in 1948. The northeast corner of Nevada and Colorado avenues was remodeled from time to time for a small movie theater, a car dealership, the military police station during World War II and finally, the Cooper Theater complex in 1963. The corner of Kiowa Street and Nevada Avenue was developed for small shops, the Democrat Publishing Company and the Buick dealership. It was later leased to Colorado Interstate Gas Co. as the site for an office building. When the company's plans changed, it was sold to the city of Colorado Springs for the development of a parking garage.

THIRST FOR GROWTH

In 1936, the Internal Revenue Service issued new regulations which required the taxation of income of corporations owned by exempt organizations. As a result, the International Realty Co. was dissolved and its assets were transferred to The Home.

The assemblage of the acreage for The Home itself and the farm and ranch lands composing the "industrial village" made The Home one of the largest landowners in the area. The farming and ranching operation continued much as

*Belching smoke,
heavy-duty equip-
ment tore through
local streets to pre-
pare them for new
streetcar lines.*



Construction seemed to be everywhere in Colorado Springs when the street car company worked on the lines.



originally conceived until shortly after World War II, when the area began to expand rapidly from the 32,000 population which had remained virtually static since 1900.

The housing shortage in the community became critical and greatly increased the value of the undeveloped land adjacent to the city. Development of any new housing was particularly difficult because of the inadequacy of the water supply obtained from the Pikes Peak watershed.

The main farming operation of The Home was located only 18 blocks from Pikes Peak Avenue. It became evident that its continued use for the propagation of corn, alfalfa and pigs was economically absurd. Even though the property was located outside of the city limits, the housing shortage was such that the city agreed to supply the ultimate developer with water and the Stratton Meadows subdivisions were born. The further development of the undeveloped land holdings could not take place until some reliable water service could be obtained.

The Home had been in the water business since its beginnings, when it acquired Count Pourtales' water system along with his undeveloped lands and vacant lots on the Broadmoor Mesa. The source of supply came from the Cheyenne Creeks under very early priorities. However, the people who settled the farms in the Ivywild-Cheyenne Cañon area had formed a mutual water company (The Brookside Water Co.) in the 1880s and also diverted water from the Cheyenne Creeks under equally early priorities. Conflicts

arose and on occasion sentries armed with shotguns guarded the headgates.

Finally, in 1926, The Home bought the controlling stock of the Brookside Water Co. With the purchase came even more land, including that of the Cresta Vista and Stardust Mesa subdivisions, the land on which Cheyenne Mountain High School is located and the vacant land surrounding it. The purchase price for the whole bag was \$46,000.

The trustees interconnected the two water systems but operated them as separate entities. Both systems, as did the Colorado Springs municipal system, had to severely curtail service in times of drought. In 1917, the trustees had rebuilt a reservoir on the top of Mount Amalgre ("Baldy") hoping to relieve these shortages. After the acquisition of the Brookside Company, Mesa Reservoir was constructed, again in an effort to solve the problem. In 1953, the trustees married the two companies by selling the Myron Stratton water assets to the Brookside. Hoping to do away with past antagonism to both entities, the name of the Brookside was changed to the South Suburban Water Co. In addition, a third reservoir, again slated to solve the supply problems, was completed in 1954.

The Colorado Public Utilities Commission had to approve not only the merger, but also the establishment of a finite territory of service which had been kept nebulous up to that time to discourage expansion. Out of the woodwork came all of the landowners who had been previously denied

"No small credit for this record of achievement goes to our predecessors on the board of trustees. Mr. Stratton's bequest was valued at \$4.4 million when planning for The Home began in 1909.

Without skillful management and asset growth, always approved by the district court which interprets the will, the dream would have died out long ago because of inflation."

*Gary Loo, president
and chairman of
The Myron Stratton
Home*

*Broad
avenues in
Colorado
Springs
always have
offered mag-
nificent vistas
of Pike Peak.*





To provide water for The Home and the residents of what is now southwest Colorado Springs, Trustees rebuilt a reservoir on Amalgre Mountain (Mount Baldy) in 1917, then added new units for water storage in 1931 and 1954. The work on the 1931 reservoir was done by a crew of 22 from The Home, using a steam shovel from the home farm.

service, with the result that the territory established by the commission was too large for the supply. The Home did directly benefit from the new service area as it included the land that was later developed as the Southgate Shopping Center under ground leases from The Home.

For rate purposes, the indebtedness of the company exceeded the valuation of the assets allowed by the Public Utilities Commission. Revenues from the company, therefore, were not and could not be sufficient to meet the debt service, resulting in continual subsidization by The Home.

Even though some financial relief was obtained through a rate increase in 1960, the supply problem was never solved. In the winter of 1962-63, precipitation from the Arkansas drainage was 10 per cent of normal. The Cheyenne Creeks were running at not much more than a good trickle and the reservoir storage was rapidly disappearing. On May 1, the company issued an edict banning all irrigation usage until further notice.

The uproar from the customers was loud and lengthy, accompanied by petitions to the Public Utilities Commission to do something about the company. Before any actual lynchings took place, the summer rains returned. It was evident that there could be no permanent solution to the problem unless an additional reliable source of supply could be obtained. Transmountain diversions similar to the Colorado

Springs solution were out of the question because of their cost. The obvious solution was a sale of the company to the city.

There was a compelling reason for the city to consider taking over the company. The Home owned all of the undeveloped land from the 1800 block of South Nevada Avenue to Fort Carson and the North American Air Defense



East Platte Avenue receives the first of many coats of paving it will see before the turn of the 21st century.

Command (NORAD). No expansion of the city southward could occur unless the water problem was solved. Without expansion in this direction the city would become even more geographically spread out than it is today. The city purchased the company in 1965. The consideration was the repayment of the debt owed to The Home and agreement to supply water to all of The Home's undeveloped lands.

Most of Pourtales' lots and undeveloped land had been sold prior to the water company as they were part of the original service area. The most notable of these was the sale in 1916 of Pourtales' casino and surrounding land to Spencer Penrose as the site for the Broadmoor Hotel. With water assured, the balance of the Pourtales property, less The Home grounds, the ranch land to the south and the land acquired with the Brookside Water Co, became very marketable. In 1967, approximately 3,000 acres of the inventory was sold to the Gates Rubber Company for \$9 million over a period of 10 years. This area became the Cheyenne Mountain Ranch development.

A portion of the proceeds from the Gates sale was used to modernize and upgrade The Home buildings. The balance left the trustees faced with the problem of selecting a proper vehicle for its investment. Stratton's restriction of investing only in "good and safe interest bearing securities" applied equally to the trustees as it did to the executors. From the beginning, the investment problem raised by this restriction was mainly academic. Advances and loans to the various subsidiaries to keep them in business, particularly the streetcar, mining and water companies, absorbed most excess investment funds. The balance was mainly used to continue a policy started for the street car company of financing the purchase of employees' homes. This program had also been expanded to assist graduates of The Home.

Stratton's investment directive was not unique for its time. By the time of the Gates sale, several courts had permitted other trusts subject to this restriction to invest in equities in order to prevent the erosion of their principal by inflation. Officers of The Home asked the Court to grant them broad investment powers in accordance with the modern "Prudent Man" Rule. A decree granting these powers was entered on May 25, 1972.

Constructed after World War I as part of the real estate which provided revenue to support The Home, a building at Colorado Avenue and Tejon Street was remodeled in 1948.





The Myron Stratton Home and the legacy of Winfield Scott Stratton played a major role in building the infrastructure of Colorado Springs, from paving streets to establishing reservoirs and providing water service.

Not only did the decree grant to the Trustees the power to invest in equities but it enabled them to use a total return analysis in considering sales of assets in the future. This acted as a catalyst in disposition of the Colorado Springs real estate.

Stratton's instructions to his executors to sell all of his assets has largely been carried out, although it has taken 96 years to do so. The Home's remaining investments, other than its portfolio of securities, consist only of five assets: the overriding royalty in the Cripple Creek District, the Southgate Shopping Center, the 500 blocks of South Tejon Street and South Cascade Avenue, 17th and Welton streets in Denver and the balance of the property lying to the west of Cheyenne Mountain High school, which is under option for acquisition by the city of Colorado Springs for open space.

The Home has been able to survive its constant battle against inflation. More than \$52 million has been spent in building, remodeling and operating The Home since its establishment, yet the value of its endowment has increased from its original 1909 value of \$4.4 million to its current worth of approximately \$71 million.

This should insure the future performance of Stratton's direction to care for "poor persons who are without means of support, and who are physically unable by reason of old age, youth, sickness or other infirmity to earn a livelihood."

A SUPERINTENDENT'S VIEW

EVERYDAY LIFE AT THE MYRON STRATTON HOME FROM 1959 TO 1980
*Jack Chamney, former superintendent and past Vice President
of the Board of Trustees.*



Keeping the power plant running to provide heat, hot water and electricity for the self-sufficient Home was a full-time job.

I started as the superintendent of the Home on July 1, 1959, with a tour led by my predecessor, Julian Tatum. I went home that night and told Frances, my wife, all about the wonders of this great institution with its 40 buildings and its own fire department. The next day, to my embarrassment, the firemen whom Mr. Tatum had mentioned turned out to be the men who stood 24-hour surveillance of the gas-fired boilers to produce steam to heat The Home, produce hot water and run two Skinner generators which produced electricity. The firemen were named when these boilers were actually run by coal and their duty was to stoke the boilers. The head engineer, at that time, was Hollis Stotesbury who, before World War II, was raised in The Home.

The biggest responsibility Hollis had was to keep the two huge generators running to provide electricity. The equipment alternated each week so that one could be completely torn down to check the bearings and other parts. As time went on, these generators aged and took more and more care. Finally, the company that made parts for these generators only did so one week a year, just before

Jack Chamney was the last superintendent to live on the grounds of The Myron Stratton Home.

Christmas. As time went on, we were all having nightmares about having to run a long extension cord to nearby Southgate Shopping Center should something happen to both generators. Finally, we had had enough and hooked into the city. A diesel generator was also installed to kick in if the city supply experienced problems.

THE GREEN HOUSE

A team from the power plant heated a green house, run by a resident of The Home, Jesse Sylvanus. This provided plantings for all the flower beds on the grounds and indoor plants for all of the buildings.

The many activities in The Home also kept the Engineering Department busy maintaining two buses and providing drivers for outside activities. The engineering crew also had the responsibility of maintaining the swimming pool and ice rink.

The larger bus took adult residents of The Home to

SUPERINTENDENTS, CEO'S AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

H.W. Cowan
1912 -1916
J.E. Brady
1916-1922
Carl S. Chamberlin
1922-1934
Lucy A. Lloyd
1934-1951
Julian P. Tatum, Jr.
1951-1959
John S. Chamney
1959-1980
Merle Alshouse
1986-1988 (CEO)
Mark Turk
1988 - current
Executive Director

*The original
Superintendent's
Home on the
grounds became
Logan Hall
residence during
Chamney's time.*





Until recently, four elderly residents without partners shared each of the larger cottages. Older couples have always had separate units. For the more frail, the Infirmary (now Winfield House assisted living facility) was available.



church, and downtown for shopping every Wednesday. It also was used by the adults for field trips to Cripple Creek, the Royal Gorge, Denver, Seven Falls and other points of interest.

DOUGHNUTS AND DRUMSTICKS

Favorite outings were the Christmas Lights tour and the Denver trip. The Christmas Lights tour included a stop at J's Restaurant on Nevada Avenue where all were treated to doughnuts and coffee and anything else they wished. Jim Johnson, the owner, would then hand out bags of doughnuts, including enough for the residents who could not make the trip. The Denver trip, by tradition, included a stop at the Drumstick, on Colorado



Avenue, for lunch. Many would bring carryout bags to take home leftovers. The excursion then became known as the Chicken Express, and the Christmas Lights tour as the Doughnut Express.

The second bus was a school bus, used mainly for children's activities, including transportation to high school football games, plays, track meets and baseball games. It also was used for skiing and sledding trips in the mountains, the favorite place being Rainbow Valley on the way to Cripple

"Cub Scouts, Brownies and Old Timers sports activities became very popular for the younger children attending school in Harrison District 2. On one occasion, a number of Home boys joined an Old Timers baseball team. Their best pitcher was a Home boy. "During one particular game, the score was tied and the opponents had the winning run on third base with two out. The pitcher, our Home boy, went into his windup. Just then, the Good Humor man went by and rang his bell. The pitcher stopped. The umpire ruled this a balk and the winning run advanced from third."

Jack Chamney



The younger boys proudly display their Christmas gifts after one annual unwrapping marathon.



Older boys in suits and ties still manage to unwrap gifts with enthusiasm.

Creek. The trip here included lunch and snacks at the Lodge.

Combined trips included a trip to Seven Falls at Christmas time to see the lights and to enjoy gifts and snacks provided by the Hill family. Other joint trips included ice shows, the rodeo, the rodeo parade, circuses and fireworks programs on July 4.

The combined activities of the adults and children



The Christmas operetta was an annual part of the celebration.

were limited. The two groups would get together in the gymnasium for a party and the passing out of gifts at Christmas time. All would have Christmas dinner in their respective buildings, then they joined together for the Christmas celebration in the gym. After their program the children would leave with the person who had placed them in The Home for a two or three-day Christmas holiday. On Halloween the younger children would visit the cottages in the Adult Department for trick or treat.

FOUNDERS DAY

The other time of the year when all would get together to celebrate Mr. Stratton's birthday, which is July 22, was Founder's Day. In the early days, The Home invited the community to visit The Home and served a sack lunch; 8,000 lunches were prepared by The Home's cooks for all those who came. After this experience, this practice was stopped and the residents celebrated on the grounds with parties in each department. This later developed into a luncheon at various restaurants in the city. On some occasions, a huge circus-type tent was set up in front of the main cafeteria. Lunch was served, with enter-



*Older girls
gather at the
Christmas tree
with their
house mother.*



tainment provided by a parade, a band playing during lunch and the children providing skits for the entertainment of all.

Presently, this celebration has again returned to an outside restaurant, the Cheyenne Mountain Conference Resort, built on land that was once The Home's cattle pasture. All these functions included relatives and friends of the residents, as well as staff and trustees.

The adult residents very much enjoyed programs in their cafeteria during the afternoon. Favorites included pianist Tom O'Boyle and a local woman's barbershop group. The cafeteria was also used for meetings to relay information to the adults. With the advent of Medicare a representative from Social Security came out to enroll residents. A meeting was called, but only a few showed up. A new meeting date was



Music and piano lessons kept students busy in their free time.



Residents of all ages attended the Memorial Day service at the grave of Winfield Scott Stratton in Evergreen Cemetery in May 1914.

rescheduled and an announcement made that refreshments would be served. An overflow crowd turned up.

(Note: Although Home residents enrolled in Medicare, it was used for outside services. Since The Home did not charge for its infirmity services until 1992, it could not qualify for reimbursement and absorbed the cost of onsite medical care.)

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

On grounds activities for the children's department were mainly the playground, the athletic field for baseball and football, the gymnasium for baseball and volleyball, the swimming pool, the tennis courts and the ice rink. Prior to the building of the

swimming pool, the children swam in an old pond in the garden area of The Home. This pond was later filled in, sown with grass and made into an outdoor museum with machinery from The Home's Cripple Creek and Victor mines, as well as The Home's old farm machinery.

Later the engineering crew and the ground crew built a regular pool. This was limited in use as there was no heat or filtering provided. When the pool was filled from the water mains, it took a number of days for the sun to heat it so it would be comfortable to swim in. Then it would not be too long before it became cloudy, and then it would have to be drained and fresh water put in again.

A very generous lady, Mrs. Lucom, an heir of the Willys motor fortune, had left a sum of money to build a

A generous gift to The Home resulted in a proper swimming pool.





Television went on the air in Colorado Springs in 1953. Like children everywhere, residents of Washington Hall were fascinated by the moving pictures in their own living room.

"We are convinced that music is one of the great educational forces in developing the mind and character of children. We know that it brings a certain happiness and appreciation into the life of the child that no other form of education is capable of developing. Every normal individual has within his heart a desire for music and a wish to express himself musically."

Fourth Annual Report of the Superintendent, 1917



nursery for children on The Home grounds. The Trustees had not acted upon this venture as it was thought that the program at the time was about all the available funds could carry.

We heard that Mrs. Lucom was going to visit the Broadmoor Hotel for a few days, so we set up an appointment with her to discuss the use of her gift to The Home. When we presented to her the needs for the improvement of



Teen-agers and music – a staple of life ever since the advent of the Victrola.



The Home's cabin provided years of mountain entertainment for countless children and adults.

the pool and the reluctance of the trustees to engage in a preschool program, she graciously agreed to transfer her gift for the upgrading of the pool.

When I moved onto The Home grounds to perform my duties, there were approximately 80 children in the four residential buildings: Lincoln, Logan, Washington and Independence, each named for one of Mr. Stratton's mines. The Adult Department had approximately 90 residents: 60 in the 15 singles' cottages, 22 in the 11 couples' cottages and the remainder in Nightingale, the infirmary (named not for the famous nurse, but for another Stratton mine).

Nightingale was used partially as a care facility when residents no longer were able to care for themselves in a cottage setting, such as when they were no longer able to go to

the Cafeteria for meals. If this situation was deemed temporary, meals would be taken to them in their cottage by the matron of the Aged Department.

The remainder of the residents in the infirmary were there for treatment on a temporary basis or to convalesce after a hospital stay. Children recuperating from major illness or surgery also stayed in Nightingale.

The Home's cabin was situated on 320 acres six miles up the old stage coach road above Seven Falls. The original cabin burned down in the 1940s, and the trustees replaced it with a beautiful log structure which had indoor and outdoor fireplaces, indoor plumbing and could sleep an entire children's hall. Each hall took turns staying in the cabin for a week each summer. The Adult Department on occasion would be taken up to the cabin for a cookout. (The property was sold in 1994 and is now a private residence.)

A resident and his concerned brother in the early Sixties.



The kitchen at Wasbington Hall girls' residence was modernized in the early 1950s.

INTERMENTS

Most of the funerals for residents of The Home were conducted in local mortuaries or churches of their choice. Burials were in The Home plot in Evergreen Cemetery, the Fairview Cemetery in Old Colorado City, or the cemetery in Manitou Springs.

These funerals were not without incidents. At one service at a downtown mortuary, a large number of young men

"The elderly were to be comfortably housed, adequately fed and permitted to follow their own past-times, so long as they were not anti-social, without undue regimentation."

Karl Ross on the terms of Winfield Scott Stratton's will

A meeting of the superintendent and house parents. Standing, left to right, are Mrs. Stewart of Lincoln Hall and Chamney. Seated are Mrs. Gould, Washington; Mrs. Copp, Independence; Mrs. Headley, Independence; Mrs. Keckey, Logan; Mrs. Veley, Lincoln; and Mrs. Burgess, Washington.



entered late and sat in the back row. When the funeral was over they left in a hurry. The funeral director mentioned it was nice of The Home boys to attend. It turned out that this was a motorcycle gang going through the city which had just stopped to join the group for reasons unknown.

On another occasion during graveside services at Manitou Cemetery, an older, retired minister was conducting the service. In closing, he asked everyone to bow their heads while he recited "his and everybody's favorite, the 23rd Psalm." Everyone bowed his head and remained so for at least two minutes. Then his voice was heard again: "Would someone mind starting me out?"

WINTER TIME

The main activity for the children during the winter months, besides the gymnasium, was a newly acquired ice rink and ski trips. The ski trips were to Breckenridge and local ski areas. Participants were The Home girls, as the boys became more involved in the rink.

Earlier, efforts had been made to have a natural rink behind Lincoln Hall. This was not successful at all as the melting and continual flooding made for limited use. We finally acquired artificial ice-making machinery at a bargain rate when we bought the ice-making machinery of a tennis club in Aspen.

Although the final rink was a little less than standard size, it was large enough to develop one of our most popular recreation programs. Hockey included every boy in The Home. Ned O'Brien, a former star player on the Cheyenne Mountain School team, and Clem Roy, a teammate of mine at Colorado College, were among those who volunteered to help. Clem's daughter, Debbie, was an accomplished skater who taught the girls figure skating, so all the children in



A beloved doll bouse was fun on a summer day.



When the All-American Band toured Europe, Cynthia Jones, a Home resident, was a part of the group.

The Home ended up participating. The rink was placed on the north side of Lincoln Hall where, because of the artificial ice machinery and the shade, it was in use nearly every day during winter.

The rink eliminated the problem of what to do on New

Years' Eve. Starting about 7 p.m., two teams were chosen from the boys and girls to play a hockey game. This game went on until midnight, when all went upstairs in Lincoln Hall, celebrating the New Year by having a huge bean feed prepared by Mrs. Cornel with the help of the girls. It mattered little that the hockey score was in the neighborhood of 150-100.

This popular activity led to The Home developing a dominant hockey program in the community. The Home had a bantam hockey team in the Colorado Springs Young America program. Many of the players became top-level players on the high-school level. The bantam team was the first



Sharing with friends has always been an important part of growing up.

Colorado Springs team to win a state championship. A handful of city boys rounded out the team.

Tournament trips provided memorable examples that boys will be boys. On one of the trips to Phoenix we decided to go by way of the Grand Canyon and stayed there one night so that the boys could have the experience of seeing this wonder. The next morning, after breakfast, we loaded the bus and, while taking the head count, asked how they enjoyed the Canyon.

A few voices were heard asking where it was. The lodging was on the edge of the Canyon, and there was a good view through a huge window where we were, but apparently, such activities as pillow fights and water fights took precedence.

Forty teenagers in a motel can be a bit of a problem, especially when the doors are made of metal. With each entry and exit, the door closing reverberated throughout the whole motel. One large, weary traveler complained to a supervisor that he couldn't sleep because of the banging doors. The supervisor was heard to say, "You'll have to speak up, I can't hear you, there's too much noise." The traveler turned and entered his room with the closing of his door adding to the overall noise.

The Home children's schooling took many forms, starting on the grounds. At one time, they attended Cheyenne Mountain School District 12. They then transferred to Colorado Springs School District 11,



"On August 15, 1943, the SS Winfield S. Stratton, a Liberty Ship, was launched by the Permanente Metals Corporation, Shipyard Number One, Richmond, California. Mary Breuning (left), seven-year-old resident of The Myron Stratton Home was the sponsor, and by a strange coincident a former resident of The Home, Clarence Teats, was working in this shipyard and to him was given the honor of painting the name on the ship. Two other alumni worked on the engines which powered this ship. Since then the S.S. Winfield S. Stratton has travelled the high seas carrying supplies to all parts of the Pacific, thus taking her part in the winning of the war."

The Triennial Report, 1943-45

the city school district, where they attended Ivywild Elementary School, South Junior High School and Main High, which later became Palmer High School.

Harrison School District 2 encompasses The Home property. When this district started a high school program, The Home's children moved there. Later, mainly because Harrison didn't have a team in the high school hockey league and Palmer High School did, students were again enrolled in Palmer to have an outlet for the boys too old for the city's Young America Hockey program.

Cub Scouts, Brownies and Old Timers sports activities became very popular for the younger children attending school in Harrison District 2. On one occasion, a number of Home boys joined an Old Timers baseball team. Their best pitcher was a Home boy. During one particular game, the score was tied and the opponents had the winning run on third base with two out. The pitcher, our Home boy, went into his windup. Just then, the Good Humor man went by and rang his bell. The pitcher stopped. The umpire ruled this a balk and the winning run advanced from third.

The Home children received many honors in school. We were especially proud when some would make the acad-

*Kites, open space
and overalls –
a perfect recipe
for a delightful
spring day.*





Boys and brass strike a harmonious chord with the teacher.

emic honor roll. Many students took part in school plays, the band and other clubs. On one memorable occasion, a boy joined the Drama Club and was selected for a play. This entailed many hours of after-school practice and when the play was presented we all attended with great anticipation.

The play was *Arsenic and Old Lace*. Our star's total part was that of a corpse, which was transported from one side of the stage to the other in semidarkness. His performance was a matter of discussion for quite some time.

Cynthia Jones, who played in the school band, was selected for the All-American Band to tour Europe. The Home helped pay for her expenses on this tour.

After graduating from high school, qualified students were encouraged to attend college, The Home paying for these expenses. Donald Jones, having saved his deceased parents' Social Security for the full time he was in The Home, graduated from Brooks Institute of Photography in Santa Barbara, Calif., one of the top photographic schools in the world.

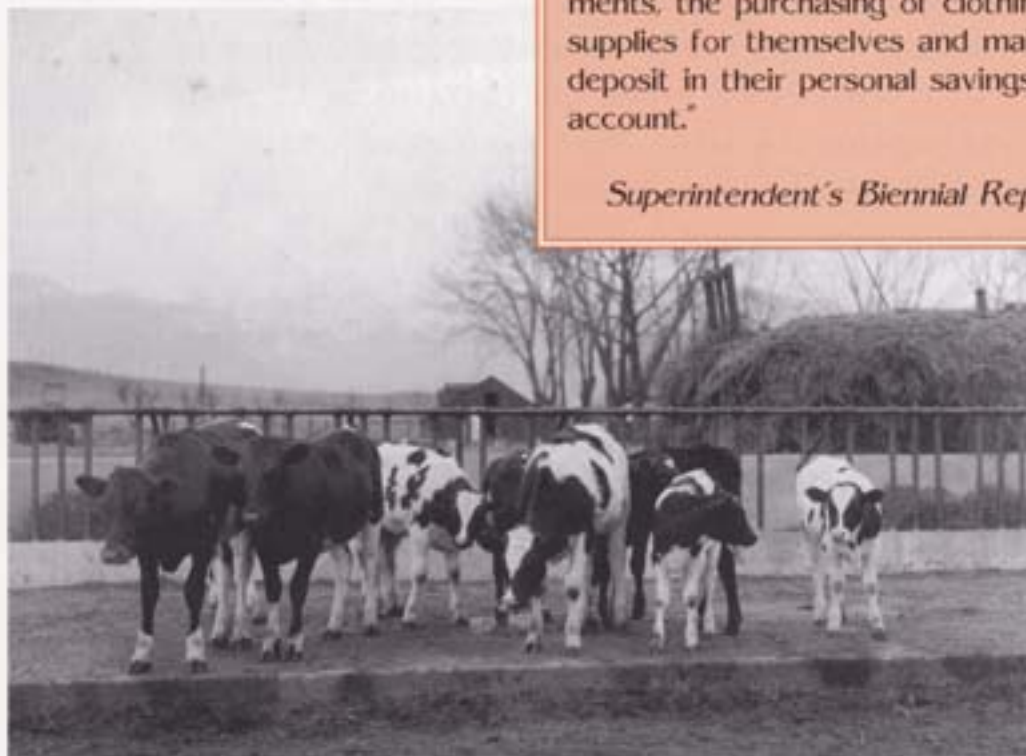
Stanley Sweaney attended Colorado State University, majoring in art. Since his graduation, he has won several awards in art and sculpturing. Stanley's love of nature became apparent while a resident of Lincoln Hall. He talked his house parents into letting him bring a discarded bathtub, from a Home remodeling, into the dormitory section of the building. Here he kept a small alligator, which soon grew into a three and one-half foot potential man-eater. The Cheyenne Mountain Zoo eventually took custody. Besides the



As has been reported before, the Domestic and Industrial training of the Home includes for the children, house-keeping, cooking, sewing, dress making, laundry, nursing, gardening, poultry raising with dairy and agricultural work including club work. We have recently organized a pig club and hereafter, the larger boys who also spend considerable time in Manual Training classes, will carry on this work.

"During the Biennial Period, \$846.07 was paid to the boys and girls for assisting with the work on the farm and at the Home. Some of the money they used for entertainments, the purchasing of clothing and other supplies for themselves and making a small deposit in their personal savings bank account."

Superintendent's Biennial Report, 1918-1920



alligator, there were snakes and several large turtles in his collection. Stanley developed into a top fly-fisherman and studied his favorite, trout in their habitat, while scuba diving.

One of the children's favorite activities during the summer was the Friday drive-in movie. The maintenance crew had fitted a stake truck with planks which were placed at different levels so that, when we went to the drive-in and backed between two speaker poles, it was like sitting in bleachers.

The children's basic health needs were also taken care of by the infirmary, but serious health problems required hospitalization. Corrective procedures such as eliminating a cleft palate or oral surgery also were covered by The Home.

One brain-damaged boy was sent to the Wallace School in Broomfield, Colorado, in 1970. (*Note: The Cleo Wallace Center, now of Westminster, offers adolescent and children's psychiatric services to Colorado Springs from its facilities in the former Children's Department of The Myron Stratton Home.*) He attended the Founder's Day luncheon in 1995 and for the past few years, has been gainfully employed as a mechanic in a local body repair shop.

The older residents also kept life interesting. One patient, who lived to be 102, slept in the infirmary but also kept his own room. After his breakfast in the infirmary he would go to his room in the cottages and watch television most of the day. Upon his death we found in his belongings a paper showing that he was from England and had a title, Sir Hubert Burhill Brown. We knew he was from England and had nicknamed him the Lord Mayor of London. His greatest thrill was when he received a letter from President John F. Kennedy recognizing his 100th birthday.

The story was that he and two brothers left England together. The two brothers went to Australia and Mr. Brown stayed in Colorado Springs, where he became a tailor. Until the day he died he patched, sewed on buttons and pressed his own suits. His title had come from a relative who was a doctor for services rendered during the bubonic plague in medieval times.

"When it became impossible to obtain meat from the local markets because of rationing during World War II, Mr. Starsmore, our Farm Superintendent, provided us with pork and beef, so we are indebted to him for helping us solve one of our major problems. However, we would have been little better off had it not been that one of our residents, Mr. August Perry, who is one of the best butchers in town, volunteered his services as butcher, thus enabling us to serve our quota of meat."

*Superintendent's
Triennial Report,
1943 - 1945*

When he died, Mr. Brown was the oldest resident on record. The average age of the adult residents was always around 85 years

The single person's cottages still consisted of four private rooms, a central bath, living room and a front porch. Usually the four persons in a cottage would share the chores in keeping it clean. In one instance one woman was in charge of cleaning the bathroom, another the living room and another the front porch. These jobs were rotated on a weekly basis.

In summer, the fourth person was in charge of watering the flowers that were placed at the sides and front of the cottages. On one occasion the lady watering the flowers had

criticized the work a housemate had done in keeping the bathroom clean. The next time the lady went out to water the flowers, she found the hose tied in knots. An emergency call was made to the office, and upon checking out this incident, the

easiest solution seemed to be to untie the hose and to go back to work.

On another occasion I was called to the cafeteria to check on a reported fist fight between two resident men, both up in their 80s. The fight was quickly broken up when it was suggested to them that the first one to swing would probably drop dead.

During the 70s, The Home conducted a widespread remodeling and replacement program. The remodeling period

"These children are in no way different than others, yet circumstances in the life have made it certain they must make their own way in the world. It is therefore of vital importance that every effort be made to give them an equal chance with their fellowman and in no way isolate their lives or deprive them of opportunities which are afforded other children outside of the Home.

"At the beginning of the Biennial period, we had enrolled in the Ivywild Elementary School, thirty-seven boys and girls; fourteen in the Colorado Springs High School; one girl in the State Teachers College at Greeley, Colorado, and one in Blair's Business College, Colorado Springs, Colorado -- making a total of fifty-three children receiving educational instructions...

"In June, 1921, one girl was graduated from the State Teachers college completing the Home Economics course and was engaged by the Board of Education at Pueblo, to fill a vacancy on their teaching staff."

*Superintendent,
Biennial Report
1920-21*



Young ladies pose for a formal portrait.

Dr. Julian Tatum, superintendent from 1951-1959, and an unidentified adult at the little girls' Christmas party.



David Strickler, president of The Home, and two young musicians enjoy the boys' Christmas gifts.

represented an important change in philosophy. We had to reduce enrollment and double up in the children's buildings while one was being remodeled. When this project was completed, we never again were able to reach the numbers of the type of children we sought, children who needed a refuge before their problems became unmanageable. During this time, the government bureaucrats had decided these types of children were better taken care of in foster homes.

In 1979, The Home's children's program then changed to the care of highly emotionally disturbed children. In 1992, The Home entered into a 25-year agreement for the Cleo Wallace Center to manage and operate these programs. This change has, once again, placed the facility for children in The Home up to capacity. It is doing service where there still

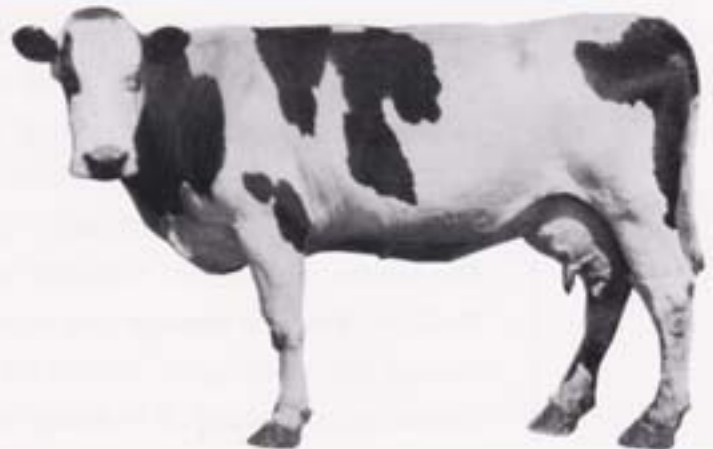
exists the greatest need.

One of the biggest projects during the 70s remodeling was the administrative building, originally the pavilion in Stratton Park, which had been moved on-campus in 1924 to an open area between the children's and adults' departments. The building was closed in and a partition erected for a multipurpose building. One section of the community building included the main home office area, a store and meat market where the buildings with kitchens and the housekeeping cottages ordered their groceries and supplies. In the basement of this building was a barber shop, a beauty shop and a large amount of storage. On the first floor, besides the office and store, was a gymnasium and a large auditorium that seated about 200 people. Before the advent of TV, The Home had Friday night movies in this auditorium which were for the

"Our dairy herd consists of 81 head of pure bred Holsteins. This herd is housed in a modern building and the milk produced cared for in an up to date dairy building with every convenience, including an abundance of live steam always on hand for sterilizing bottles, etc. Anyone interested in a Modern Dairy and who may wish to inspect ours is welcome to call. Our competent Dairy man, Mr. C.L.Drumeller, will be pleased to show those interested through the premises and explain the uses of the various appliances, etc.

"These herds thus number 331 head, and in spite of the drought we have an abundance of feed to carry us through the winter."

Triennial Report, 1934-1936



residents, old and young, employees and their families who wished to attend.

In the remodeling, the auditorium was eliminated as it hadn't been used for years. The remainder of the building remained about the same and had a facelift. Replacing the auditorium were

two meeting rooms. During this same period, a new, state-of-the-art infirmary and a cafeteria in the adult section were built.

The Home had operated a farm and dairy since its inception. Most of the farm land was sold for the development of Stratton Meadows in the late 1940s. In addition, The Home ran a beef herd on the pasture lands that were sold to the Gates Land Co. in 1967. The ranching operation was terminated a few years before this sale.

The dairy continued in operation until 1975, when the herd was sold. Under the tax reform act of 1969, the dairy operation was considered an unrelated business activity of The Home and was subject to ordinary income tax. In addition, it had become uneconomical to run because of the ever-increasing cost of feed. The dairy had provided unlimited milk for residents, with the surplus production was sold to the dairy co-op. Even after it was closed, the boys at Lincoln Hall still had their quart of milk set on the table for them at every meal.



Acrobats from The Myron Stratton Home at a Boy Scout circus. Troop Number One in Colorado Springs was chartered at The Home in the 1920s and still provides a color guard for the annual Memorial Day ceremony at the grave of Winfield Scott Stratton.

A fond memory of our dairy was during the winter months we would experience happenings from the good old days when the top of the milk bottles would freeze, allowing about four inches of cream to rise out of the tops. On a snowy day when it was difficult to deliver the milk by truck, a horse and sled would appear with bells and all.

I was the last of the superintendents to reside on The Home grounds. It certainly allowed one to keep his finger on the pulse of the institution, both day and night. "Living on" had its pluses and minuses. One humorous happening I will always remember was the action of one couple with



As long as there was a dairy, and even after, fresh milk was an important part of meals.

A quiet place allowed time to read and think.

whom I had been discussing new carpet for their housekeeping cottage. One morning at 2 a.m., my telephone rang. It was this resident, informing me that they had picked the color of their carpet.



Another evening, my telephone rang around midnight. It was the matron of the adult department reporting that a very heavy lady was stuck up in her bathtub. These were the old tubs on feet and with very high sides. I told the matron to place a sheet over the lady. She and I then slithered the lady over the side and onto the floor. The matron and the lady carried on successfully from there.

A big plus for us was the advantage my six children had in the use of the recreational facilities in The Home and the excellent living conditions. They, in reality, were residents of The Home and made many friendships lasting even to this day. Our family became part of The Home family.



Residents gather at Stratton's grave in the early 1930s.

WHY THEY CAME TO THE HOME

The Stratton Legacy, a newsletter conceived by Harold Wynne in 1992, offers a firsthand look at stories of children who resided at The Myron Stratton Home. It is a compelling record of the Depression and World War II years, in particular. Excerpts from Wynne's work follow, edited slightly because of space constraints.

THE THRAILKILL CHILDREN

In January 1994, Wynne recorded the story of the seven Thrailkill children, told by their mother, Lorine Gilbert. Her husband Jim Thrailkill died on Feb. 25, 1943, more than three months before son Ken was born. Mrs. Gilbert wrote:

"Even after (Jim) died, before Ken was born, I had offers to adopt all seven of the children. I think that's when it was clear to me – I would do everything I could to keep them from being separated."

The young mother went to work as a waitress when the baby was two weeks old. Her father worked days and she worked nights, so they switched roles as they passed each other on the way to and from the bus stop. Her mother,



Washington Hall, the girls' dormitory

in a wheelchair after a stroke, needed care.

When her oldest son contracted polio, the health department wouldn't let her work. Scientists understood little about the polio germ and there was no vaccine, so they feared an epidemic. Financial problems followed. When she went

back to work, "someone told me to talk to Dave Strickler (The Home's attorney) as he ate every day where I worked.

"I did, and in a short time Miss Lucy Lloyd (The Home's superintendent) came to the house. She explained everything. Bless her heart. I was so worried what to do. In a short time, Jim, Bob and Bill went out to The Home. Gladys and Ken had to wait until they were old enough. It wasn't easy – for any of us...but it was a Godsend for me to know, they had clothing, food and whatever they needed. The Stratton Home had their teeth checked, eyes checked and glasses prescribed if needed. The Home saw them through hernia surgery, tonsils out, broken bones fixed, and the chicken pox and measles.

"The children were in school every day unless they were sick, and in church on Sunday. They all learned to swim. All five boys were Boy Scouts and Gladys, a Brownie. Two were Eagle Scouts.

"On special days, they could come home, if there was someone who didn't have a place to go, I would bring them

"The Twins, age 5," is the only identification left on this photo from August 1936.



home to be with my family. I remember having Larry Shoemaker, and lots of times, Jackie Silas, and I think Larry Faubion...

"From the seven children I have 14 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren, the 14th on the way. No doubt the Stratton Home helped make them what they are. They made their own lives. I just loved each and every one. I'm so proud of every one of them, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, too."

THE WYNNE BOYS: TRAGEDY STRIKES

"**L**ike many of the children at The Stratton Home, the three Wynne boys who lived there came from a 'broken home' that split apart in the aftermath of the train accident in which our little brother died." So begins Harold Wynne's poignant tale of what happened to his family, beginning in 1928.

Wynne continued: (Our little brother Charles) got out of his playpen and followed Lee, who didn't know Charles was there, on the way to a small grocery store two blocks away. At the intersection where the Santa Fe tracks crossed North Corona, Charles Edward's feet got tangled between those tracks and wood provided for cars to cross the rails. When the train screeched to a halt we rushed to the scene, where we watched as his legless body was lifted from under the train. My brother Albert helped wrap Charles in a blanket and put him in a neighbor's car. I was with Mom in the hospital waiting room when she learned that Charles was dead on arrival at the hospital.

After that, from time to time, Dad simply did not come home, sometimes for a day or two. Then there was a more or less formal separation of our parents. The Great Depression was in full swing and it impacted

An earnest six-year-old poses in his scrubbed up best in the summer of 1936.



Dandelion digging was a time-honored custom. The diggers were girls – the boys had other chores. Payment was 10 cents a bushel, packed down.



our family. We moved frequently and attended four or more schools, sometimes away from and back to the same ones...When we were out, we earned money by selling newspapers or magazines. We were not supervised when we were out on the street. Young as I was, I didn't know the difference between a legal separation and divorce. As brothers we were obsessed, before and after the divorce, with the hope of bringing our parents back together. But when the divorce became final in 1934, Wayne went to Ogden with Dad and the rest of us went to the Stratton Home. Separation then was more like a scattering of the family."

"So many of the things I learned in The Home have helped me along my life – from the sewing classes, working in the different departments in the summer to earn money, even the digging of dandelions by the bushel...so many of the things that were provided that I would not have had the chance to enjoy."

*Barbara
White Osuna*

THE BROTHERS MOVE TO THE MYRON STRATTON HOME

"I remember the day in 1934 when Miss Lucy Lloyd came to look over the home situation of my family with a mind to admit me and two of my brothers to the Stratton Home," Harold Wynne wrote in another article in the December 1997 *Legacy*. "I am not certain that was the day we actually went to the Home. But that day's scene of Miss Lloyd sitting prim and poised, confident, and possessed of a wholesome beauty, facing us and mother is vivid."

He continues: After three or more years of separation from my father and trying to keep her four boys together, the

*On the grounds.
An early, undated
photo.*



divorce was about to become final. It had been handled for her by David Strickler, The Home's attorney and trustee. Emma Jordan, a wealthy woman for whom Mom worked before she was married, as a maid and companion, was the one who recommended to the trustees that the Wynne boys be admitted. She loved Mom as though she were a daughter and knew what Mr. Strickler knew — that Mom could not care for us properly while working the long hours she had to put in as a beauty operator – as long as 16 hours on a given day.



*Rolling pasture land provid-
ed plenty of room for both
cows and children to roam.*



After the street car company ceased operations, residents had relied on buses and drivers like Vern Ellis.

"Mom knew The Home offered advantages she couldn't provide us. Our future was bleak with the street life to which we were destined. We had moved from one house to another at least a half a dozen times, from one school to another almost as often, and had been in and out of the Day Nursery (a daycare facility at the corner of Rio Grande and South Tejon streets, still in operation). We had been split up from time to time. Albert was sent to live with a childless aunt and uncle in Illinois for a couple of

years. One summer Lee and I and, I think, Wayne were sent to live on a farm near Lamar and on another occasion, while Mom was taking beauty operator's training, to live in an old red brick apartment in La Junta. By the time Al, Lee, and I were to go to The Home, Wayne, eldest of the Wynne boys, was living with Dad in Ogden, Utah, although Mom had won custody of all four of us.

Mom had assented to the admission of Al, Lee, and me to The Home before Miss Lloyd's visit that day. But as Mom and Miss Lloyd sat facing each other, I could feel the tension.

My mother had struggled valiantly to keep her brood together and now her chicks were about to be taken from her, including me – her 'baby.' Bright smiles cast our way by Miss Lloyd gave assurance to me but didn't help the way Mom felt.

Miss Lloyd was merely the vehicle by which the culminating act was about to take place. I think Mom's manner would have been the same for anyone else who came to usher away any of us. My move to The Home was the greatest thing that ever happened to me. I entered a whole new life from the instability that I previously experienced.

THE FLOOD AND BARBARA WHITE

"My name is Barbara 'White' Osuna," she began her story in the May 1994 edition of the newsletter. "I went into The Home in the summer of 1935 – after the Memorial Day Flood demolished just about everything my mother, Emma Heatherly White, had. She worked at the Broadmoor Hotel kitchen, making a whole \$10 per week, and was a deaf mute; therefore things were kind of tough for her to raise a kid alone."

She continued her story:

When I was 7 years old, I thought my mother had abandoned me, even though she would come to see me each weekend. My parents had divorced before I went to The Home and so I felt neglected. Sorry to say, I felt that way for a long time, and it wasn't until I came to California during World War II that I finally realized she had done her best for me. She had no one to help her since her parents were gone



As automobiles became more common, teen-agers found themselves on the road in the summer, making cross-country excursions to see the sights with superintendent Lucy Lloyd and bus driver Vern Ellis.

*All this nostalgic picture
of the Fifties is lacking is
a poodle skirt.*



and her brothers and sisters had all left home and were in other states.

Mother lost her hearing when she was only six months old, from whooping cough and scarlet fever. While she was growing up, her father thought she was a dummy and would not send her to school until the authorities found out about her and made them send her to the Colorado School for the Deaf in Colorado Springs. She was there from the age of 10 until 21 years of age.

My father was deaf and had lost his hearing at two years. They were both at the school and were married after they graduated. Times were tough for them, as it was for all of us during the years after the Depression...

So many of the things I learned in The Home have helped me along my life – from the sewing classes, working in the different departments in the summer to earn money, even the digging of dandelions by the bushel...so many of the things that were provided that I would not have had the chance to enjoy. I know I did not appreciate what I had at the time, but by the time my two boys were born, I realized what The Home had taught me. I realized that I had learned more in The Home than I would have living with Mother...

Many people feel that to have been put into a 'Home'

"From the seven children I have 14 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren, the 14th on the way. No doubt the Stratton Home helped make them what they are. They made their own lives. I just loved each and every one. I'm so proud of every one of them, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, too."

*Lorene
Thraillkill Gilbert*



Floyd Lindstrom was 20 years old on this summer day in 1932. Ten years later, he was drafted into the Army and sent to Italy, where he received a Silver Star for gallantry in action. On Feb. 3, 1944, he was listed as missing in action and later declared killed in action on the Anzio beachhead. He was awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously, as well as the Purple Heart and the Italian War Cross and is buried in Nettuno, Italy. Lindstrom represents the many men and women of The Home who served, and in some cases gave their lives, during World War II.

would be awful, but I feel that it was the best thing my mother ever did for me. Although my mother was deaf, I was not, and when I came to live with her (in California in 1943), I was amazed to see how other hearing children treated their parents who were deaf. I have always talked about being raised in The Home and that there was definitely no shame in being raised there."

THE RYANS

Photos of the 1935 Memorial Day flood of Monument Creek, which accompanied the Legacy story of Barbara White Osuna, stirred memories for Edith Ryan Sampson, who lived at The Home from 1919 to 1925. From her report in June 1994:

(In 1935) my mother's home where my sister and I resided with her was 1206 S. Nevada Ave., southwest across the intersection from Lowell Street where Barbara White Osuna's mother lived. When flood waters raged from the west of our home, when Monument Dam burst, our frame house was lifted from its foundation and tossed against a



*Eighth-grade graduates
from The Myron
Stratton Home in 1921*

concrete garage and torn to pieces. All we had left were the clothes we were wearing. Our lot became a portion of Dorchester Park.

Mother was rescued by city firemen with ropes. We were so thankful and happy we survived, the material loss meant nothing.

*Staff members
and other resi-
dents of the chil-
dren's depart-
ment pose with
the graduates.*



THE LOSS OF A FATHER



Malcolm Ryan and his sister, Marjorie, all grown up at ages 27 and 19, respectively

My father had been one of the attorneys for the Brooklyn Rapid Transit System (New York's subway), Mrs. Sampson continued. He had pulmonary tuberculosis. At age 30 he came to the Modern Woodmen Sanitorium in Colorado Springs for treatment. When improved he had a law office in the Mining Exchange Building. He died of a lung hemorrhage at age 33. I was 3 and Marjorie was 9 months old.

The first day of July 1919 when Marjorie and I entered The Myron Stratton Home remains in my memory as though it were yesterday. I would be 9 the next month, and my sister was 6. My brother (Malcolm), 14, had been admitted to The Home several months earlier than we two girls. He had been our "father role model" and cooked and took care of us while mother worked. So we had been a very close family, full of love

Separation was hard on all of us. I remember mother would come to Ivywild School when she could, just to be with us at recess. She cried and we cried. Dr. (E.J.) Brady, superintendent, requested her not to come. She could only visit on Sunday. Much later, mother had a Model T Ford, which she cranked using both hands and arms. To make it up Stratton Home hill (where apartments are now on top), she put



The swimming pool of the Thirties was a mecca on hot days in summer, even when the water was a trifle chilly.

the Ford in reverse gear and backed up...

Of course, we had chores. I remember picking currants from the bushes near the cottages. Miss Putnam, our cook, would judge if production was sufficient for the time spent. She loved opera, and we heard Caruso's voice soaring from her bedroom Victrola when we entered the kitchen. We were assigned our turn to wash and dry dishes. The pots and pans were hardest.

We learned to stand at our places at the table as one of us thanked the Lord for his goodness. I continue to recite the prayer after 75 years. (I have been an active member of First Presbyterian Church since 1941). "Dinky," the streetcar, took us from in front of Washington Hall over the reservoir dam west of The Home's grounds to Lake Avenue and along Seventh Street, on down the hill to Ivywild School and Ivywild Church.



Edith Ryan, age 22, on a 1932 visit to The Home



The Home nine gathers at their Home field. Note the fashion of backwards baseball caps of 60 years ago.

One tremendous opportunity The Home offered was piano. I took lessons for several years from Miss June Simpson, who lived in a cottage. When I returned to my mother, she sacrificed for one year in order for me to continue lessons, but alas, to no avail. I can read music but do not play.

We used to join with the older girls on Sunday evenings, together with their matron, Miss Louise Sullivan, "Aunt Louise," and single circle games and have sing-a-longs with the player piano. "Aunt Harriet" (Loud, one of the matrons) taught us to love books by reading to us after we were in bed. Perhaps it was *Little Women*, and the chapter ended at a most exciting part. We would beg to hear just one more chapter.

When I was 12 and 13 I took sewing lessons. I sewed my own gingham dress I wore when I graduated from eighth grade at Ivywild. Then came Cheyenne Mountain School at the ninth (grade) and square dancing. I loved it! In those days, folk dancing was included. We at the Stratton Home



Carl S. Chamberlin, Edith Ryan Sampson's beloved superintendent, in 1930

sewed our own costumes. *The Littlest Wise Man* was our Christmas play and the Stratton Home kids participated.

I remember Mr. Carl Chamberlin, our beloved superintendent, taking a group of us girls to Giddings Department Store downtown. [Note: Chamberlin was Winfield Scott Stratton's nephew.] He patiently waited as we selected winter coats as our Christmas gifts from The Home. Roller skates were my prime joy, a gift from The Home. Of course, we had stockings of oranges, apples, nuts, candy, and the like. When I left The Stratton Home and returned to my mother, my pretty gingham dresses I brought were sufficient for my sophomore year at Colorado Springs High School.

Mrs. Simpson, age 88, is the oldest known living alumnus of The Home. On Memorial Day 1998, she laid a wreath on the grave of Winfield Scott Stratton during services in Evergreen Cemetery.



The Home was less than five years old and Christmas decoration were lush on the Washington Hall staircase.

THE HOME AS I KNEW IT AN AFTERWORD LUCILE M. HART, RESIDENT OF THE HOME FROM 1943 TO 1950

On Memorial Day 1998, Ms. Hart shared her experiences with those who attended an annual ceremony at the Evergreen Cemetery gravesite of Winfield Scott Stratton. The event was sponsored by Friends of Winfield Scott Stratton. Ms. Hart's story has been edited to fit the space.

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Lucile Hart, and I was a resident of the Myron Stratton Home for six years, 11 months and 24 days. I'm pleased to see so many gathered here today in honor of Mr. Stratton. I would like to give you my own personal glimpse of The Home as I knew it.

I went to Stratton Home when I was seven years old. I remember riding past the orchards and the huge lawn of Washington Hall, walking up the wide stairs into the foyer, where we were met by the matron, Mrs. Nichols. We called her "Lady." I didn't understand why my grandmother was crying as she left us, but I wasn't afraid as my two big sisters were with me. I was given a brief tour of this great big building and then was assigned a bed in the little dorm which contained 15 beds and many other pieces of furniture.

DAILY LIFE

It was difficult at first, as life was very regimented. I learned to make my bed and make it right. If it wasn't made correctly, I would find all the bedding piled in the middle of the bed when we came home for lunch, and I had to make the bed again. I brushed my teeth three times a day with Calox toothpowder at the long sink, more like a trough, with eight spigots. Our shampoo was tincture of green soap; we always had shiny hair and never had to worry about head lice. We also had shiny floors, since the same soap was used to clean the floors, bathrooms and everything else we had to keep spotless.

I learned to keep my locker neat and how to hang my towel and wash cloth and keep my things in perfect order. Anything less meant one demerit and 10 demerits meant no Friday night movie. I missed quite a few!

After making our beds and getting dressed, we all had assigned chores such as sweeping, dusting, vacuuming, emptying the trash, etc. The first bell told us that breakfast was ready, to finish our chores and wash our hands. The second bell meant "Come and get it." We would line up against the wall outside the dining room until Mrs. Smullin, the matron, came. She would select a girl to escort her, and she then preceded us to the tables. There we would stand behind our chairs, at four round oak tables, and she would lead us in prayer.

Here I learned table manners: chew with your mouth closed, never eat with both hands, never rest your arms on the edge of the table (and table cloths were checked for gray areas around the edges after meals) and many other important social graces. If you accidentally dropped any of your silverware during a meal, you had to eat under the center table, a humiliating experience. After meals, we again had chores to do, clearing tables, sweeping floors, washing dishes, pots and pans and silverware. I didn't like being assigned to "pots and pans" because that meant that on Saturday mornings, I had to scrape the burned-on grease off the cast iron skillets with a paring knife.

SCHOOL DAYS

We were bussed to school at Ivywild Elementary, then to South Junior High and finally to Colorado Springs High School. If we earned good grades in school, we were treated to a very special dinner at Miss Lloyd's house and then played games. (Note: Miss Lucy A. Lloyd was superintendent from 1934 to 1951.) One year, she took us to the

Swiss Chalet, a very high-class restaurant, where I had my first and only taste of caviar...Yuck! Also, if your grades were good, Stratton Home would pay for your college education.

On Sundays, we went to Sunday School, Protestants to the Evangelical United Brethren Church at Nevada Avenue and Vermijo Street and Catholics to St. Paul's in the Broadmoor. We were given ten cents from our bank accounts for the offering, which I promptly spent for candy at the corner gas station. I remember dear Mrs. Frisby, our Sunday school teacher, and how she suffered with hives, but was always there. God bless her. At 12 years of age, we were baptized and given our own Bible.

HOLIDAYS

Halloween was a fun time, except for the ugly black and yellow bumblebee costume I had to wear. We would have a weenie roast at the pavilion with cider and big red Delicious apples.

Christmases were wonderful! We decorated the stairway banister with evergreen boughs, and on Christmas Eve we stood on the stairs, in white robes and holding lighted candles. We sang Christmas carols as the Trustees came in. We then performed a Christmas skit or pageant for them. Our beautifully wrapped presents under the huge Christmas tree were then passed out. Every year we were given a new dress and new shoes, and a new coat every other year. And we were given a box of candy and one toy. Mine was usually a pair of clamp-on roller skates. Then we hurried to the Art and Craft room where we donned our new clothes and proceeded to model them for the Trustees to the tune of "Parade of the Wooden Soldiers." We walked along the edge of two rugs (there were six in the living room), making a full-circle turn at the corners of each rug. Christmas morning meant getting up early (as if we had been able to sleep) and going Christmas caroling to the cottages where the elderly lived.

Easter was an exciting time, too, with an early morning Easter egg hunt on the grounds by our building. We each had to find the two eggs with our names on them. If we found an egg with someone else's name, we had to put it back. Easter breakfast was two Easter eggs, orange juice and hot-cross buns...a very special breakfast.

The first time I ran away was shortly after I went to live at The Home. Gerry E____, Mary B____, and I stole a sack of green apples from the orchard, and with three cents, we took off. Down the Brady's Road (now Southgate Road), past the Haley's MO billboard, and past the Last Chance Saloon, when we saw Miss Lloyd's wood-paneled station wagon coming. We scattered, and ran through the pink archway of some motel. I remember Ken S____ (a staff member) high-jumping a hedge, picking me up as though I was weightless and carrying me, under his arm, back to the station wagon. Ken was a BIG guy! Our punishment was bread and milk in the kitchen for several days.

I remember another time, on Halloween, when three of us decided to take in a movie. We arrived too late to see the movie, and I think it was Tommy A____'s mother who drove us back to The Home in the rumble seat of her car.

Many of us used to sneak out at night, not to run away, but to enjoy the feeling of freedom. Sometimes we would go swimming in the pool, sometimes we walked through the beautiful gardens, and sometimes we just sat on a curb and talked.

I remember a bulletin board in the upstairs hallway where our demerits were posted. There was a plaque beside it that said, "All liars have a yellow streak." I scrutinized my body from time to time, looking for that yellow streak, and finally concluded it must be on my backside, as that was the only place I couldn't see.

RANDOM MEMORIES

In summer we woke up to the singing of birds coming in through the open window and in winter to the clanking radiators as the heat came on.

Digging dandelions for 10 cents a bushel, packed down! No one could outdig Renalda M. _____ and me. Blisters were painted with merthiolate and, wearing a sock sans heel and toe, we went back to digging.

We could always find a horny toad in the circle behind Washington Hall or a lucky four-leaf clover in the patch beside the stairway in front.

Playing jacks on the grapevine-covered front porch; owning a golf ball was a real treasure (and of course, one demerit for eating the grapes).

The girl's playhouse and the baby bunnies every spring.

The wooden summer swing under the big maple tree that always has yellow caterpillars or, if we were lucky, we found a black and orange striped "fuzzy wuzzy."

The fourth-grade contest I won on "Why We should Buy War Bonds." I had to go to the radio station and read it live on the air.

The hand-cranked Victrola with about six records. Four of them were "String of Pearls," "William Tell Overture," "A Shanty in Old Shantytown," "Little Brown Church in the Vale."

I could fill a book with my memories of Stratton Home.

MUSIC LESSONS

In addition to food, shelter and clothing, I was given violin lessons, piano lessons, voice lessons, dance lessons, sewing lessons, and swimming lessons. I was given a good education and taught hard work, good manners, good morals, compassion and responsibility. I also learned to accept the consequences for my behavior.

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

The lessons we learned at The Home were important to us and gave us the courage and tenacity to teach these same values to our children. No, The Myron Stratton Home was not a paradise, although the beautifully maintained gardens and the landscaping would have you believe otherwise, but it was our salvation compared to "what might have been."

Stratton Home took the elderly poor and gave them back their dignity with a beautiful place to live, good food, free medical care, and when the time came, a burial place at Evergreen Cemetery. It saddens me that today's "home alone, latchkey kids" don't have the same opportunities I had. They are still out there; I've met them.

I was a den mother for seven years. I taught my cub scouts how to build birdhouses and how to shimmy up a tree to hang them. We toured the Pepsi plant, the police station and many other places. These were good times.

But I also think of the eight-year-old who always brought his four-year-old brother to the meetings because he couldn't leave him home alone. Or the eight-year-old who missed a lot of meetings because he had to stay home with his 11-year-old epileptic sister. If she had a seizure, he was to call the paramedics. Or the 12-year-old ex-scout who hung himself in his garage because he was lonely. His parents had gone on vacation and left him home alone.

What foster home would have taken my sisters and me and kept us together for seven years and given us what Stratton Home gave us? Or the four Olivers or the seven Thraifkills? None! Could a foster home have given us music lessons, dancing lessons, and all the other opportunities and advantages that The Home gave me? I don't think so.

At one time, Stratton Home was a 5,000-acre facility with its own power plant, its own water supply, hospital, laundry, gardens, orchards, green house, cafeteria, theater, gymnasium, football and track field, tennis court, swimming pool, shoe repair, playground, picnic pavilion and mountain cabin as well as its own hog farm and prize dairy herd, a totally self-sufficient facility that provided so much at absolutely no cost to the state, the city or the individual taxpayer, all because of the generosity of Mr. Stratton. Thank you, Winfield Scott Stratton.



150th Anniversary

Winfield Scott Stratton

The Myron Stratton Home shall provide support to those in need so that the quality of their lives will be improved by having received such assistance. The Home fulfills the mission by providing housing and other supportive services. Beneficiaries are Colorado residents, primarily from El Paso County, served directly or through collaborative arrangements with agencies that share the vision and values of Winfield Scott Stratton, The Home's benefactor.

In implementing the mission in accordance with Mr. Stratton's will, those individuals to be served are "poor persons who are without means of support and who are physically unable by reason of old age, youth, sickness or other infirmity to earn a livelihood." It was Mr. Stratton's intent that such recipients be treated with dignity and be well cared for, including receiving instruction and training, to enable them to become self-sustaining; and, for the elderly to live in a caring environment.

Mission Statement

The Myron Stratton Home
2525 Highway 115 South
Colorado Springs, CO 80906